

Earth First! Action Update

No.32 OCTOBER 96

30p

'The only obligation which I have a right to assume, is to do at any time what I think is right.' – Henry David Thoreau.

STOP THE CLAMPDOWN! RECLAIM THE FUTURE!

"So long as people fight against oppression and exploitation, we will be there, fighting alongside them."

Solidarity was the name of the game, as groups from all over the country came together in Liverpool, to form alliances and unite in action under the banner of 'Reclaim The Future! Stop The Clampdown!' Bringing together the unemployed with workers struggles and raising awareness of animal rights, ecological issues and workers' concerns, thousands came out in support of the 500 dockers sacked for refusing to cross a picket line. Overcoming all reservations associated with the political implications of such an event, for many it was to become one of the best actions this year.

On Saturday 28th around 10,000 people joined the parade down through Liverpool to the pierhead. Earth First!ers, trade unionists, dockers, road protesters, Kurdish groups, a large contingent of anarchists, Workers' Power and other assorted itinerants all joined the demonstration. There was a noticeable absence of the SWP and Militant in any great numbers – it seems the dockers' struggle was not going in the direction the left desired.

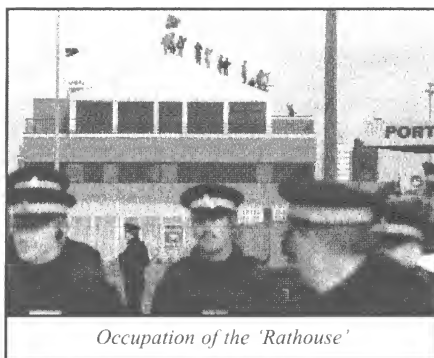
Unfortunately numbers dwindled at the end of the march as the speakers began a boredom offensive, provoking most people to run to the pubs. The sound system didn't kick in until later, playing to a considerably reduced crowd as many also had to take coaches home early. After a couple of bands had played, the party venue was spread by word of mouth to avoid attention by police and small groups inconspicuously made their way to the squatted Customs and Excise house. Within two hours of people arriving the squat was surrounded by tooled up riot police, but after some negotiations, a confrontation was averted, the police left and the party started.

On Sunday 29th there were discussions on various topics and a number of workshops took place throughout the day. In addition to this, there was planning for the next day's action, where valuable lessons were learnt from working with a wide variety of groups.

THE OCCUPATION OF SEAFORTH DOCKS

On the morning of Monday 30th the tug boat operators went on strike, and at around 6am the docks were attacked. Under the very noses of the police who had been watching all night, two trucks full of dodgy looking people drove straight up to a side gate which a security guard kindly opened.

Thirty activists had got through by the time he realised his mistake. After cutting two fences, one group ran to the gantries to be greeted by a security guard who demanded the password! This was considered unnecessary by the twelve activists who proceeded to occupy two of the gantries.



Simultaneously the other activists who had entered, occupied machinery, and one group approached the office, or 'rathouse' as it's known by the dockers, from behind. Outwitting the police they scaled two fences, ran up the fire escape, made a human pyramid and managed to climb onto the roof to fly two red, green and black flags as well as hanging a banner saying 'Sack the Bosses not the Workers'. Sadly the banner enjoyed under an hour of glory before being lost in a tug of war with the police. Out on the main gate around 800 protesters and dockers had gathered and spent most of the afternoon confronting the police as well as the scab workers.

Meanwhile, in the city centre a group of 20 activists occupied the offices of ACL (the major container company using Seaforth docks) and spent about half an hour talking to one of the directors discussing their shortsighted involvement with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company!

Quietly, back on the picket line, in a tent backing onto the fence, a hacksaw got to work and around sixty people disappeared through the hole into the docks before police noticed anything amiss. A dash was made for the Rathouse with two people being pulled up onto the roof with only the aid of a rope. There was delight on discovering that one of the two was a determined docker who then spent the rest of the afternoon waving one of the flags and making new friends.

After about nine hours of occupation and several picket line arrests, a deal was brokered between port police and the occupiers whereby the people on the gantries and offices didn't get arrested and the police got.... nothing.

The celebrations soon turned sour on the walk back to the squat. Angry that they had just had the complete piss taken out of them, police proceeded to use snatch squads randomly on the crowd. Many people found themselves on the end of bitter violence as police waded in with unprovoked attacks, hospitalising at least one person.

On arrival at the squat many had to immediately board coaches home. The remainder, realising it was probably not a good idea to stay at the squat, were escorted by the dockers to a pub where they could stay the night. The rest of the evening was spent getting totally pissed with the aid of £200 put behind the bar by the dockers and a bloody good party was had by all!

The whole event has proved the genuine support that exists between groups. It is no exaggeration to say that the amount of support between us and the dockers was unsurpassable. Any prejudices either group had previously held were certainly overcome that day. To the surprise of the dockers, women occupied the gantries and roof, while men wearing dresses and nail varnish were lifted over the gates! We were impressed by their militancy, tolerance and sincerity.

We should all be able to decide what happens to our lives and environment, and must continue to recognise the importance of participating in each other's struggles against human and ecological exploitation.

As well as this, on the Monday, ACL, the major container line using Seaforth docks, stopped using the docks and the Merseyside Docks and Harbour Company shares dropped dramatically. Elsewhere in the world there were solidarity protests with international blockading of ports. Bill Morris, the dockers union leader, has since ordered the dockers to disassociate themselves from our movement but the dockers have refused, stating that they stand by us in total solidarity. As they said: 'next time you lot need a hand digging up any roads, give us a call!'

Anybody who witnessed police brutality on the day or has video or photographic evidence of this please contact Kevin Robinson in Liverpool on: 0151 207 3388. This evidence is to be collated for a formal complaint.

COURT DATES FOR THE A30 CAMPS ARE THE 8TH, 10TH AND 11TH OCTOBER. EVICTION IS EXPECTED AT ANY TIME AFTER THESE BUT MOST LIKELY STARTING MONDAY 14TH OCTOBER. GET DOWN THERE FOR A PARTY ON SATURDAY 12TH AND HELP PREPARE DEFENSES AND RESIST EVICTION AFTERWARDS.

FOR DETAILS CALL: 01404 815729.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

On 27th September the DoT announced that they were dropping funding for any 'improvements' to the A303 past Stonehenge 'for the foreseeable future'. They confirmed that all the surface routes proposed for duelling of the road had been rejected and that they could not currently afford the three mile £300 million long tunnel alternative.

At the road camp near Bingley, West Yorkshire the Highways Agency have run out of money for the clearance contract and so work won't be starting for a least a year. Contact Leeds Earth First! on: 0113 225 4686.

A book about Twyford Down and the M3 is being put together by the people who were involved. If you were there, accounts, photographs, personal archives etc. are needed. On 12th October there will be a meeting and exhibition in Winchester, with a full moon picnic on St. Catherines Hill the night before. For more details phone: 01962 868763.

The Northern Earth First! Regional Gathering will be taking place 1st-3rd November at Bingley Rye Loaf Camp. Get in touch if you can help organise, give workshops, have any input or are simply interested in attending. Tents and food for two days will be needed. Contact: 0113 262 9365.

There will be a guide with tips on how to put together an EF! gathering ready soon. It will be available from Avon Gorge EF!

Earth First! will be having a stall at the Anarchist Bookfair on Saturday 19th October. Any leaflets that people would like to be given out or displayed there please send them to the Action Update as soon as possible.

There will not be the expected Earth First! National Action this year. This is due to everybody being busy with other action and campaigns. Instead of this at the South East Regional Earth First! Gathering the idea of a National Action for next March was discussed and this seems a far more realistic idea. Watch this space!

More Power Now! is a situationist inspired climbing magazine and is available for 50p from C.H., PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY.

On 3rd October, Simon Sunderland, originally sentenced to five years for graffiti, had his sentence reduced on appeal to two years. He has now been released. Only about another 60,000 to go!

WHATLEY QUARRY

No work has yet started in the Mendip Hills, on the expansion of Whatley Quarry by quarrying company ARC. On 25th of September, Hanson's, the owners of ARC, had their EGM interrupted by protestors both questioning inside and a small, but very noisy crowd outside. At least two shareholders decided to sell their shares after talking to people outside about future plans for Whatley Quarry. Who knows how many more would sell if Lord Hanson had not brushed environmental questions aside during the meeting.

Meanwhile a Whatley local is in the process of taking an appeal against the Quarry's expansion to the high court.

Other locals took matters into their own hands, just before the Extraordinary General Meeting, by cutting the Quarry's private railway line which disrupted work for a day. They ensured that there would be no danger to human life by placing red stop lights miles up the track and informing the local radio station, as well as giving an interview as to why action was taken.

The Mendip Hills Not Holes telephone number is no longer valid, though they can still be contacted at the same address.

JSA ACTIONS

On the first day of the Job Seekers Allowance various groups across the country voiced their disapproval. In Brighton over three hundred people gathered in Churchill Square and accompanied by police paid a visit to the DSS office in North Street that was already being occupied by the Justice? crew.

From there they headed en masse to the second office in West Street where two people climbed onto the roof to hang a banner. The third office visited was being manned by scab workers as the staff were on a one day strike against the JSA. There they were treated to a piece of Street Theatre about the effect the JSA would have had on Jesus, if he had had the misfortune to be around in Britain today.

Meanwhile in North London an old DSS building was squatted, and a banner denouncing the JSA was hung from the roof. At the same time as this a demo was in progress outside Westminster Central Hall.

For more information on campaigns against the Job Seekers Allowance and how to avoid the worst of it contact your local anti JSA group. To find the address of this contact Brighton Claimants Group on: 01273 671213.

NABURN WOODS

'Naburn Woods - Healthcare in Action!' is just one of the signs painted around this former hospital site near York where direct action folks have had their busiest month yet fending off developers BAA Mc Arthur Glenn.

As the NHS served eviction notices, the previously quiet camp went into a frenzy of activity, up trees and into tunnels and drawing in an astounding rush of community support. A constant stream of York people brought blankets/tarps/food/clothes/climbing gear/tools/beer and good wishes. They climbed trees, helped build lock-ons and barricades, painted and added support on the camp noticeboard.

The NHS remained tight lipped about why they were ruining the long term health of York. By trading woodland for factory outler shops that would draw traffic from seventy miles away. They admitted that they were only thinking short term and that the protesters were right to be concerned.

Sir John Greatham, non-executive director,

visited the site in his Range Rover belching fumes and accusing the protesters of wasting NHS money by using NVDA.

That evening it was nationally exposed that his £25,000 car and £10,000 perks, all paid by the NHS, made him the country's number one public service fatcat. Not just NHS corruption is involved, Caddick Developments have bought up all the adjacent farmland and are confident of trashing the swathe of countryside south of York once the Naburn shops and access road are completed.

When the eviction came on the 25th September continual positive local coverage and support meant that even the forty bailiff's men were half hearted and the chief of police was apologetic about there having to be an eviction at all. Nothing was trashed and £30,000 worth of fencing went up around the site despite there being rights of way. Even these have been kept open, locals being accompanied by security every time they walk their dogs.

There is increasing awareness among the locals that the land is as much theirs as anyone elses. There is now a camp on the gate-being looked after by sympathetic security! Bizarrely they found out that when they dress up as protesters passing cars start tooting their horns and people offer support!

Meanwhile actions are in the pipeline. Help is always welcome so visit the site and get involved. Contact 01904 410185 for more details.

HUNGER GATHERING

'The Hunger Gathering' is an alternative forum that runs parallel to the World Food Summit, and it will be happening in Rome this year between 9-18 November. It will cover many issues including biodiversity, biotechnology, transnational corporations, farmers and indigenous peoples' rights. It will bring together over 150 young people from all over the world and there will be an information centre there which will make available mostly leaflet/small publication size information on food and related issues.

If you have information you want to put out, either on the issues you are working on, or on your organisation, then send about 150 copies, before 1st November, to the ASEED Amsterdam office at: ASEED Europe, PO Box 92066, 1090 AB Amsterdam, Netherlands. For more details about the Hunger Gathering contact: Hunger Gathering Secretariat, c/o Senza Confini, Via Faleria 900183, Roma or telephone Manchester Earth First! on: 0161 225 4863.

WEEK OF ANTI ARMS TRADE ACTIONS

After the legal victory of the four ploughshares women at the end of July (who back in January smashed up a Hawk fighter jet) there is an increased level of public debate and concern over theft of land and resources that leads to human and environmental degradation of Indonesia and the lands that it has occupied.

This awareness and concern needs to be directed to stop the arms industry and government selling arms to Indonesia. With this aim there is to be a week of actions from 2-6 December in London, and the co-ordinators of this week are specifically asking for the involvement of Earth First! activists. They say that there is a need for office occupations, banner drops, blockades etc..

There will be a briefing pack produced soon, but anyone that is interested in finding out more now can phone 0171 281 0297 or 01603 611953 or write to Campaign Against the Arms Trade, 11 Goodwin Street, London N4 3HQ.

How to Contact the Earth First! Action Update

By Post: Earth First! Action Update, PO Box 9656, London N4 4JY. By Phone: 0171 561 9146 By E-Mail: actionupdate@gn.apc.org.

Please enclose a SAE for replies, and to subscribe to the free e-mail server - send us your details.

Earth First! Website address: <http://www.hrc.wmin.ac.uk/campaigns/earthfirst.html>

ENCRYPTION FOR THE MASSES

A brief and simple introduction to Pretty Good Privacy (PGP) and the need for it..



Most direct activists at one time or another must have wished they were able to discuss and arrange details of a surprise action over the phone but have been denied this convenience for fear of PC Plod listening in and sabotaging their carefully made plans. So how can you tell if your phone is tapped? You can't. Phone taps these days are completely undetectable so don't believe anyone who claims otherwise. Occasionally those listening in may decide to warn you off whatever they think you're up to by playing back part of a recording of a previous conversation. The fact is with modern digital telephone exchanges, tapping your phone no longer involves anything as tedious as sending an engineer round to your local exchange with a line installer's phone on a pair of crocodile clips. It's now as simple as someone typing your phone number on a computer terminal the other side of the country from you. Telephone voice scramblers, are frequently portrayed in many spy films and are rumoured to be an essential accessory on every 'important' desk in Whitehall. In fact they have traditionally cost thousands, have required a license - unobtainable by the likes of us, and, cop this... the US government keeps a secret 'Key' enabling them to eavesdrop on every single one ever sold.

Having had to suffer the iniquity of the CJA and now M15 on our backs, it's about time activists had some kind of resource to help redress the balance. The ability to plan actions over the phone with absolute security would have major implications for EF! and many other direct action groups. So if you were to be told that now a voice scrambler able to make totally secure calls right across the world for the cost of a local call is available as a freebie, you'd probably think this was nothing but a cruel windup. What's the catch? Well, the freebie is a public domain computer program called PGPfone useable on almost any up to date multimedia computer. So you need a computer and a modem to use it, but that's not such a big deal as it could be the same machine you already use for surfing the net, picking up e-mail, banging out newsletters and everything else the clued-up EF!er uses a computer for.

Phil Zimmerman the guy who, with the help of other cryptologists, wrote PGPfone in the US has become a cult figure amongst cyber-punks and grass roots organisations. He had previously written and released into the public domain via the internet his original PGP (Pretty Good Privacy) data, text and e-mail encryption program a few years ago. So why have these very talented people created these fiendishly clever and valuable programs for free? Consider the following:

The US government had already made available remote 'point and click' wire tapping ability to the FBI. They had then been trying to

introduce a bill compelling manufacturers of secure communications equipment to use a form of encryption that the US National Security Agency had developed themselves called Data Encryption Standard (also known as the clipper chip). DES is not actually that secure. Worse still, the US government gets to have it's very own secret back door key. A bit like everyone having to entrust their spare house key to the local smack head. There were also plans afoot to force the phone companies to build into their exchanges the ability to simultaneously listen - with voice recognition technology into 1% at a time of all phone conversations in major cities. In the UK, the home secretary is supposed to authorise every phone tap but that's hardly realistic when it's now become this easy. There are stories of FBI agents who have become accustomed to being given whole wadges of pre-signed wire tap authorisation forms by their bosses to be used against anyone they choose. It was obvious that the next logical step in all this would be for the US government to outlaw the few effective forms of encryption available.

So what if you've traditionally used the in-built password protection features of commercial programs like Word, Access or PKZIP to protect your sensitive information? Forget them, such protection is almost trivial for your average hacker to crack let alone government funded agencies. There are many freely available password cracking programs both freebies and commercial. Some of these programs work so fast that their authors have deliberately built in delays so that the users are lead to believe that the programs are having to work quite hard and that they're getting good value for money. Both PGP and PGPfone use what's known as strong encryption. This means that the internal math's they use is so clever that even if the NSA and GCHQ were to throw all their resources and the most powerful computers in the world at their disposal into cracking it, it would take them thousands or even millions of years to decipher encrypted messages. It's somewhat akin to being locked on with a D lock that is so strong that no tool on the planet can cut through it... If only!

Predictably the US government was worried about all this, they've been used to intercepting and being able to decipher supposedly secure communications to and from left wing and third world governments all over the world. In its usual paranoid way the government actually classify any kind of strong encryption as munitions and therefore Phil suddenly found himself being charged with the illegal export of restricted munitions from the USA, quite heavy stuff, potentially about four years in the nick. But the charges against him were suddenly and inexplicably dropped early this year. One can only surmise that the US government realised that the cat is already out of the bag and that there are plenty of other clever cryptologists/programmers in the world who are capable of writing similar strong encryption programs and putting them into the public domain from outside of the USA. In

some countries, notably France and China (interestingly, the only two countries still blowing up bits of the world with nuclear bombs), strong encryption is already strictly banned. Phil sees encouraging everyone to habitually use strong encryption as an effective way of discouraging governments like the US and UK from moving to banning encryption altogether as it will already have become too widespread.

All this sounds good, so where can you get it? Both PGP, PGPfone and a whole pile of other encryption freebies can be downloaded on the internet from the international PGP page in Norway at <http://www.ifi.uio.no/pgp/>

PGPfone being a Windows 95 program is reasonably easy to set up and use. The manual that comes with it contains much interesting background politics as well as a mountain of impressive but incomprehensible math's. To read it you'll need Adobe Acrobat reader available for free download from: <http://www.adobe.com/acrobat/readstep.html>

The earlier PGP data encryption program, because it can run on just about any machine is command line driven and is therefore a lot more cryptic. There are however numerous Windows 'front ends' available (from the PGP site amongst many others) to make PGP a bit more user friendly. BUT... and it's a very big but, there are many, many pitfalls awaiting the naive user. For instance, Windows tends to create many temporary files containing your original text that can be easily undeleted by someone else later. These sort of problems can render any attempts at strong encryption as futile if you're not fully aware of them. Encryption is a big subject so if there's enough interest I'll do a more detailed write up on how to set up and use both of these programs effectively. Send an SAE to c/o Action Update or e-mail us actionupdate@gn.apc.org.

OK techie bit coming up:

The minimum spec computer to run the PC version of PGPfone is as follows:

486 DX66 or faster running Windows 95 or NT, fitted with a sound card, some old walkman headphones, a microphone that actually works with your sound card (many don't so test it first with sound recorder) and a 14,400 or faster good quality modem.

For the Apple Mac version you need: 25mhz or faster 68040 processor, Thread Manager 2.0.1, ThreadsLib 2.1.2 and sound manager 3.0

Oh, and don't forget that you'll also need a friend with a similar setup at the other end of the line to have a dodgy conversation with! This sort of spec computer is probably quite a bit better than most eco-activists have available. It was actually the typical 'entry level' machine being sold about a year ago and so should be available on the second hand market now for under 400 and falling in cost at a rapid rate each month so get your unlawful arrest claims in. Yours in privacy....Krip Tik.

In future issues of the Earth First! Action Update we hope to use this insert space to print articles covering various topics of interest and relevance to the radical ecology movement. If anybody would like to write an article of between 1,000 and 1,500 words including references, bibliography and a further reading list, please send to the Action Update, including a photograph or graphic if possible. Articles may be edited for length and clarity.

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Anarcho-Primitivist Network
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Anti-Fascist Action
BM Box 1734
London WC1N 3XX
Tel: 0161 232 0813

Conscious Cinema
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Brighton. BN2 2EF
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Contraflow
56A Info Shop
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Fax: 0171 326 0353

Counter Information
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Green Anarhist Network
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Hunt Saboteurs Assoc.
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<http://envirolink.org/arrs/HISA.hsa.html>

Industrial Workers
of the World
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Justice?Cothrom
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Glasgow G42
Tel: 0141 226 5066
/424 1797

Justice?Schnews
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E. Sussex
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<http://www.cbuzz.co.uk/SchNEWS/index.html>

Legal Defence &
Monitoring Group
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WC1N 3XX
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McLibel Support Campaign
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WHAT IS EARTH FIRST!?

Earth First! is not so much a cohesive group or a campaign as a convenient banner for people who share similar philosophies to work under. The general principles behind the name are non-hierarchical organisation and direct action to confront, stop, and eventually reverse the forces that are destroying this planet and it's inhabitants. Earth First! believes in using all non-violent tactics available to enable us to do this. The contacts are autonomous groups that consider themselves to share the above principles. International contacts are entry points into that country's own network of groups. Other contacts are ones whose aims and principles are ones that we agree with fully or in part, or groups that we think may be of use or interest to people. New additions or alterations are shown in **bold**.

INTERNATIONAL ANTI CORPORATION DAY

At the US Earth First! Round River Rendezvous in July this year the 29th of October was selected as an International Day of Action against Corporations.

Across the world, groups will be planning actions targeting their least favourite corporate plunderer. Whether your choice of corporation is Shell, Nike, Mitsubishi, Exxon or Champion, whether your target is the corporate headquarters, a neighbourhood toxic dump or the managing directors private residence, corporations around the world will feel our united rage!

If your group wants to participate in the International Day of Action to End Corporate Dominance begin organising your action now! To make this a co-ordinated campaign the campaign in the US would like to know a little bit about each of the chosen targets. Please send this to the address below. As the co-ordinators of this campaign say: "These protests will not be taking place in a vacuum. The challenge to corporate dominance is coming from all over the world; from labour, human rights, indigenous resistance groups, peace, social justice as well as ecological movements." Contact: Earth First! End Corporate Dominance Campaign, c/o EF! Austin, P.O.Box 7292, Austin, TX 78713. Tel: (512) 320-0413. E-mail: entropy@eden.com.

DELTA REPORT

Nearly one year after the execution of the nine Ogoni environmental and human rights activists in Nigeria, campaigners across the world are preparing for an anniversary week of events from 4th-10th November. The Ogoni are calling for pickets of Shell garages and other solidarity actions against the company. The focus is on pressing for the release of nineteen more Ogonis who face the same charges as Ken Saro-Wiwa and the others after also daring to challenge Shell. Suggested events include candlelit vigils on Friday 8th November and actions on Saturday 9th November, along with occupations, mock hangings, workshops, videos and literature readings. Grassroots activists in one country will be shutting down all Shell garages nationally, so at least go down and picket your local!

DELTA Newsletter (number 2) will be sent out in mid-October and will include all the latest news and background on Ogoni, Shell and Nigeria. Any actions you are planning for November should be sent to DELTA for future issues. More details from: DELTA, BOX Z, 13 Biddulph Street, Leicester, LE2 1BH. Tel/fax: 0116 255 3223.

CAMBRIDGE RECLAIM THE STREETS

In spite of a massive police operation, aided by the Essex Police helicopter, several dog sections, Suffolk and Norfolk Cops and under the watchful gaze of the Forward Intelligence Team (plainclothes and on their shiny new mountain bikes) over 1,000 people successfully reclaimed Mill Road in Cambridge for six sunny hours on Saturday 14th September. They turned one of the city's most congested roads into a free party zone. Local residents were supportive with many asking

when the next one was going to be. Police managed to intercept one of the tripods but made the mistake of trying to bring charges of theft against the tripod team, when the scaffold poles were actually legal. The other tripod was successfully raised and was soon followed by a crowd that had gathered at the railway station. A thin blue line held them back for a few minutes but a strong surge broke through. Drummers and two sound systems then kept the party going for the whole afternoon, with several hundred out-manoeuvred cops just standing by and watching. The sounds went off at 6.30pm and most people then left. Around forty people resisted the police line which was then blocking most exits and trying to clear the residue of the party instead of waiting for them to leave of their own accord. A typical over-reaction by the police yet again as they all changed into full riot gear. The riot cops then spent about the next hour baton charging the forty all the way to the ring road, while locals looked on bemused.

Cambridge police just couldn't resist a macho show of force after losing the day to RTS - even the local MP is making a complaint to the Cambridge Chief Constable. Tally for the day was thirty-eight arrests. A defence campaign for those arrested is now being formed, with the prospect of suing for unlawful arrest. If anybody was arrested or assaulted by police, or witnessed that happening, please contact: Box A, 12 Mill Road, Cambridge. Photographic or video evidence is also needed.

BOUGAINVILLE REPORT

News just coming from Bougainville Island in the Pacific says that there has been renewed and very heavy fighting between the Papua New Guinea Defence Forces and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army over the weekend of Friday 6th to Sunday 8th September.

A camp of PNGDF was over run and captured by the BRA forces on Sunday 8 September. The PNGDF had been warned in June this year and given one month by the South Bougainville BRA forces to move out of the area. This is the first known major contact between the BRA forces and the PNGDF since the much heralded PNGDF 'Operation High Speed 2', which was launched in June 1996 and defeated by the BRA forces on 15 July. There is a rumour however that the PNGDF is planning 'Operation High Speed 3' in the near future. According to BRA information thirteen PNGDF soldiers were killed and five surrendered. The BRA say that they have also captured twenty four rifles, ammunition, and one mortar launcher with live mortar rounds. For more details contact: Bougainville Freedom Movement, P.O. Box 134, Erskineville, NSW 2043, Australia. E mail: V.john@uts.edu.au or Bougainville Freedom Movement (UK), c/o South Downs Earth First!

GORLEBEN

On Monday 7th October rail services across much of Northern Germany were sabotaged. Overhead powercables were pulled down with grappling hooks. Campaigners opposed to the transport of nuclear waste by rail to a storage site near Hanover are believed to be responsible.

In May this year thousands of police and protesters fought battles near Gorleben as the arrival of nuclear waste from France was opposed.

EVENTS

OCTOBER

- 12 Meeting and Exhibition about Twyford Down and the M3. Contact: 01962 868763
- 12 Day of Solidarity with McDonalds workers. Picket your local store. For leaflets and information phone: 0171 713 1269.
- 14 A 30 Camp Evictions expected to start this week. Get down there! Contact: 01404 815729.
- 16 Annual Day of Action against McDonalds. Contact: 0171 713 1269.
- 19 Manchester Reclaim The Streets. Meet 1pm Albert Square, Manchester. For more details contact: 0161 226 9904.
- 19 Anarchist Bookfair at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London. 10am-8pm. Stalls, talks, food, workshops and more. Free!
- 26 Groundswell meeting. National Network for unwaged/claimants/unemployed. Contact: Claimants Action Group, c/o East Oxford Community Centre, Princes Street, Oxford OX4 1HU.
- 26 Somerset gathering of NVDA activists. Meet noon at Yeovil Friends Meeting House. Call Avon Gorge EF! 01225 448556 or 01935 25418.
- 29 International End Corporate Dominance Day! Target your least favourite corporation.
- 31 Halloween Reclaim The Streets, Oxford. Meet Carfax Tower in the centre of Oxford at 6pm.

NOVEMBER

- 1-3 The Northern Earth First! Regional Gathering at Rye Loaf Camp at Bingley. For more details contact: 0113 262 9365.
- 2-5 'Burn The Base - Bonfire Action' at Faslane Peace Camp. Workshops followed by actions and party. Contact 01436 820 901.
- 5 Stop the COPEX Arms Fair. Meet 9am Littleworth Common, Esher, Surrey. For more details contact: 0171 281 0297.
- 4-10 Week of Anti-Shell and Nigeria actions/events to commemorate the first anniversary of the execution of the nine Ogoni activists.
- 8-17 The Hunger Gathering, Rome. For more details contact: 0161 225 4863.
- 11-17 5th Anniversary of Santa Cruz massacre in East Timor. Actions organised by solidarity groups. Contact: 0171 281 0297 for more details.
- 22 Free Ted Kaczynski (Framed by the FBI as the Unabomber). Picket outside the US Embassy, Grosvenor Square, London W1. Meet 12 noon.
- 23 Direct Action Conference, Brighton. Talks, workshops, discussions, stalls etc.. Followed the next day by a party to celebrate the 100th issue of Schnews. Contact Justice?: 01273 685913.
- 30 International No-Shop Day. Do your bit to overthrow capitalism by doing nothing - well buying nothing anyway! For anti-consumerism campaign details contact: Enough, One World Centre, 6 Mount Street, Manchester M2 5NS.

DECEMBER

- 2-6 Week of Actions in London to stop Arms Exports to Indonesia. Contact: 0171 281 0297 or 01263 512049.
- 4 Twelfth anniversary of the Bhopal chemical disaster in India that has so far killed around 7,000 people. Smash Union Carbide and all industry!
- 6-13 Committal hearings against the Gandalf 6 (Green anarchists AND ALF) at Portsmouth Magistrates Court. Contact BCM 1715, London WC1N 3XX.
- 8 Anniversary of Mumia Abu Jamal's arrest. Meeting planned, contact: Friends of MOVE: 0171 272 5368.

LEGAL DISCLAIMER:

The editors of the Earth First! Action Update do not intend to encourage people to carry out any illegal action. The Earth First! Action Update is for information purposes only.

The Earth First! Action Update is free to prisoners. Please send in the name and address of anybody that might like to receive it and we will send out a free copy of every issue to them.

CIVIL WAR IN DENMARK

In early September forty people occupied an artificial island in the middle of Oeresund, Denmark. Up until it was occupied it was part of the construction of the Oeresundbridge, an ecologically damaging bridge construction project.

The new republic was named 'Ecotopia' and there was then an official declaration of independence made as well as an application for membership to the UN. The machinery was nationalised and offered to scrap dealers at a cheap price. The inside of the huge island (five kilometres long) was still filled with water so they commandeered a motor boat and went for a ride watched by some very unamused police. They stayed on the island for six hours and the police had difficulty getting rid of them.

When they were eventually taken off the island they were arrested and have since been fined, but as they say "it was well worth it!"

As well as everyone having great fun, work on the bridge was stopped, it raised a lot of attention in the media all over Denmark and Sweden and it also brought together lots of groups that had never worked with each other before.

COSTAIN AGM

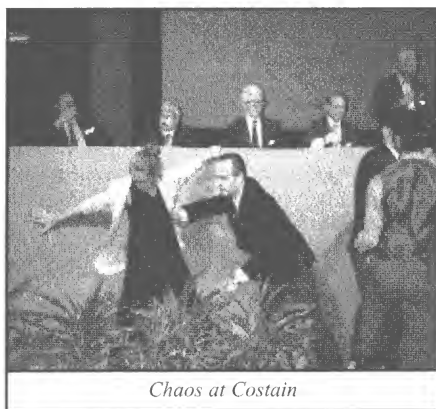
Newbury contractors Costain held their AGM on 9th September in Westminster. Campaigners had been eagerly looking forward to this opportunity for months and on the day, more protesters (200+) than shareholders turned up.....so the meeting belonged to us!

Friends of the Earth had done loads of good build-up work getting all the 'eco-shareholders' to the meeting, but merely wanted them to ask questions (that'll change things!?), and got last minute jitters about damage to their reputation if the meeting became chaotic.

Meanwhile, lots of EF!ers were plotting how to cause maximum chaos! Same planet, different worlds.....what would happen, we wondered? Things started slowly, with 'polite but firm' questions ensuring that we seized the agenda of the meeting before it had even started. It soon became clear that Costain were going to have a very rough ride, with speeches by the Chairman and a representative of Intria (Costain's Malaysian backers) cut short by hecklers. In fact, there was very little but Newbury-related heckling for most of the two-hour meeting.....that's what we call good business!

As the formal votes of the meeting approached, protesters swarmed towards the stage, intent on stopping the meeting. The usual game of rugby with Pinkerton's Security followed, with

stinkbombs and plastic plants flying! The Chairman was reduced to bellowing out the votes, red-faced and frantic, as the meeting dissolved around him. Total chaos – lovely!



Chaos at Costain

The protest was extremely successful; an AGM has never been trashed to this extent before. Nonetheless, it was a shame not to actually shut down the meeting with so many activists present. Maybe we'll do that next year – hang on to your share certificates! Contact Third Battle of Newbury: 01635 45545.

OTTERS IN NEWBURY

Signs of visitation from Otters have been found at Rackmarsh, Bagnor on the Lambourne river. The Highways Agency response is: 'We'll build tunnels so they can cross safely,' never mind trashing their habitat, a designated SSSI.

The European Parliament has written to the British Government asking them to explain the justification for going ahead with the bypass. This strengthens the case currently with the European Ombudsman. The ideal scenario is that eventually the Ombudsman refers the Newbury case to the European Court of Justice.

Almost half of the route is now fenced though recently 85 panels of 10 ft high mesh-welded security fencing (cost £160 per panel) was 'pixied' at the Chase compound. For some reason the Police don't consider this 'legitimate protest' and are looking to isolate those involved in such 'senseless acts of vandalism' (their words).

At the Diggers Community, Gotan, a compound has been established immediately adjacent, but not including, the en-route vegetable garden. One pixie, dressed as a red hat, a team leader for Pinkertons, lead bemused white hats astray and upon reaching Gotan he threw off his hat proclaiming 'I'm joining them!' More defections and deification are expected. Tree houses have been appearing at Spiritual Roots. This camp, adjacent

to Gotan, is on a proposed access road which must be constructed prior to destruction work continuing. Indeed there are still a small number of trees on route requiring occupation.

Two tunnels, one below a flower bed at Gotan and the other at Spiritual Roots were captured. Next morning at Spiritual Roots, the Diggers, true to their name, dug out the poorly mixed concrete, reclaiming the cement for lock-ons and tunnel re-enforcement. The massive Police and Security night time operation must have cost the earth since it required two Cavers, said to be paid £3,000 each. After reclaiming the Spiritual Roots tunnel the police threatened its occupants with criminal damage to the soil! The tunnel remains occupied.

A further ten injunctions have been sought at the High Court, and this brings the total to twenty. There is no apparent reasoning behind the choice of people injunctioned, with some having not been actively involved for months! For more information call Third Battle of Newbury on: 01635 45544.

FASLANE – THE BATTLE CONTINUES

The fourteen year old resistance centre Faslane Peace Camp was set to close just two months ago but instead there has since been an massive increase of activity.

On Tuesday 10th September another batch of Trident nuclear warheads arrived in its evil convoy of military vehicles. The convoy was stopped three times at Balloch near Loch Lomond and despite the police being out in force the stoppage lasted for one hour. Two people managed to d-lock themselves onto lorries carrying warheads. Thirteen people were arrested, mainly on breach of the peace charges. Local support for the action was very encouraging and hopefully these people will be up for a bit of action on future convoys passing through their town.

As well as this Faslane Peace Camp are inviting you to the 'Burn The Base' Bonfire Action, between Saturday 2nd and Tuesday 5th November. During the weekend there will be workshops on issues such as Trident, the convoy and NVDA and the law. There will be tours of military land, actions, a torch lit procession and a party to celebrate the efforts of Guy Fawkes. This promises to be an eventful few days and they would appreciate as much active support as possible. If you have any fire torches and other fire equipment take them along with you, as well as the usual tent, sleeping bag and a sense of humour – you need it in a world governed by megalomaniacs who seem hell bent on destroying the Earth. For more details contact Faslane Peace Camp on: 01436 820901.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE EF! ACTION UPDATE

Please send me the next twelve copies of the EF! Action Update, here is my minimum contribution of £5 (£6 for International). Don't send cash, make cheques payable to Earth First! Donations above £5, for those who can afford it, enable us to reply to enquiries and give free subscriptions to prisoners, libraries, community groups etc. Please send more if you can. Fake names are better for security, and postal orders are more secure than cheques.

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